

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for publishing information associated with a user, ~~wherein the information comprises a category and an affinity value associated with the category, comprising the steps of:~~

determining an affinity value for the user with respect to a topical category,
wherein the affinity value represents a strength of a relationship between the user and
the category;

determining whether the affinity value crosses a predetermined threshold;
in response to the affinity value crossing the threshold, determining whether to
publish information related to the relationship between the user and the category,
wherein determining whether to publish the information comprises:

determining whether an affinity publication policy associated with the user
indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission
from the user to publish the information; and

transmitting to the user a message that requests the user to submit a
response that indicates whether or not the user wishes to have the information
published if it is determined that the affinity publication policy indicates that the
information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user;

determining whether the user submitted a response to the request within a
predetermined period of time; and

performing a default publication action if the user does not submit the
response before the predetermined period of time expires,

wherein the predetermined period of time is specified by the affinity
publication policy associated with the user, and

wherein the predetermined period of time is set by the user in the affinity
publication policy.

2. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the default publication action is specified by the affinity publication policy associated with the user further comprising the step of determining whether the user submitted a response to the request within a predetermined period of time.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 2, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, or (ii) not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category further comprising the step of publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 3, wherein the step of publishing the information comprises the step of updating a profile associated with the user such that the profile indicates that the user has an affinity for the category included in the information.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 3, wherein the default publication action includes publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, and further comprising the step of notifying the user that the information was published.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, or (ii) not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, 2, further comprising the step of not publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 3-6, wherein the default publication action includes not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, and further comprising the step of notifying the user that the information will not be published.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 6, wherein the default publication action includes publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, and notifying the user that the information was published-2, further comprising the step of determining whether an auto-publish flag is set to TRUE or FALSE.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 6, wherein the default publication action includes not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, and notifying the user that the information will not be published 8, further comprising the step of publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time and it is also determined that the auto-publish flag is set to TRUE.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined threshold is set by the user 8, further comprising the step of not publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time and it is also determined that the auto-publish flag is set to FALSE.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 10, wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy further comprising the step of notifying the user that the information will not be published.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy 2, further comprising the step of

determining whether there is a particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined threshold is set by an administrator 13, further comprising the step of accessing the particular affinity publication policy if it is determined that there is a particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 14, wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy amount of time is specified in the particular affinity publication policy.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises monitoring the user's interaction with a set of one or more stored documents 14, further comprising the step of accessing a default affinity publication policy if it is determined that there is no particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises mining electronic mail messages sent to and from the user 16, wherein the predetermined amount of time is specified in the default affinity publication policy.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises receiving a metric value input manually by an administrator 16, wherein the step of determining whether an affinity publication policy indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user to publish the information, comprises the step of determining whether the accessed affinity publication policy indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user to publish the information.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises receiving a metric value input manually by the user further comprising the step of determining an affinity value threshold.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 16, wherein the set of one or more stored documents are managed by a knowledge management system 19, further comprising the step of determining whether the affinity value is less than the affinity value threshold, wherein if the affinity value is less than the affinity value threshold, the information is not published.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 20, wherein the knowledge management system determines a master category list, and wherein the category is included in the master category list 1, further comprising the steps of:

receiving the response from the user;

determining whether the response indicates that the user wishes to have the information published; and

publishing the information if it is determined that the response indicates that the user wishes to have the information published.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 21, wherein the predetermined threshold is different for different categories included in the master category list wherein the step of publishing the information comprises the step of updating a profile associated with the user such that the profile indicates that the user has an affinity for the category included in the information.

23. **(Currently Amended)** A system for discovering and publishing a user's affinities, comprising:

affinity discovery module that function to discover one or more the user's affinities of the user,

wherein the discovering an affinity includes (i) determining an affinity value for the user with respect to a topical category, the affinity value representing a strength of a relationship between the user and the category, and (ii) determining whether the affinity value crosses a predetermined threshold;

an affinity publication policy associated with the user; and

affinity publishing module that manages the publication of means for publishing the discovered affinities,

wherein managing the publication of a discovered affinity includes (i) transmitting to the user a message that requests the user to submit a response that indicates whether or not the user wishes to have the affinity published, (ii) determining whether the user submitted a response to the request within a predetermined period of time, and (iii) performing a default publication action if the user does not submit the response before the predetermined period of time expires the affinity publishing means publishes the discovered affinities in accordance with the affinity publication policy

wherein the predetermined period of time is specified by the affinity publication policy associated with the user, and the predetermined period of time is set by the user in the affinity publication policy.

24. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 23, further comprising a storage system that stores the affinity publication policy profile associated with the user.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 24, wherein the storage system stores a user affinity publishing means publishes a user affinity by updating the profile associated with the user.

26. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 25, wherein the affinity publishing module publishes the affinities of the user by updating the user profile 23, wherein the affinity publication policy indicates whether the affinity publishing means is required to get permission from the user to publish a user affinity prior to publishing the user affinity.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 23-26, wherein the default publication action is specified by the affinity publication policy the affinity publishing means comprises notification means for notifying the user of a discovered affinity and for requesting permission to publish the discovered affinity.

28. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 27, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the affinity, or (ii) not publishing the affinity the notification means notifies the user of the discovered affinity and requests permission to publish the affinity only if the affinity publication policy indicates that the affinity publishing means is required to get permission from the user to publish the affinity prior to publishing the affinity.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 28, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the affinity and notifying the user that the affinity was published, or (ii) not publishing the affinity and notifying the user that the affinity will not be published publication policy specifies a grace period.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 23, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the affinity, or (ii) not publishing the affinity 29, wherein the affinity publishing means includes determining means for determining whether the user has responded to the request for permission within a predetermined amount of time.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 30, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the affinity and notifying the user that the affinity was published, or (ii) not publishing the affinity and notifying the user that the affinity will not be published affinity publication policy includes an auto-publication flag that indicates what action or actions, if any, should be taken if the determining means determines that the user has not responded to the request for permission within the predetermined amount of time.

32. **(Currently Amended)** The system of claim 23, wherein the predetermined threshold is set by the user 31, wherein the predetermined amount of time is specified in the affinity publication policy.

33. **(Currently Amended)** A computer program product for publishing information associated with a user, wherein the information comprises a category and an affinity value associated with the category, the computer program product being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising computer instructions for:

determining an affinity value for the user with respect to a topical category,
wherein the affinity value represents a strength of a relationship between the user and
the category;

determining whether the affinity value crosses a predetermined threshold;
in response to the affinity value crossing the threshold, determining whether to
publish information related to the relationship between the user and the category,
wherein determining whether to publish the information comprises:

determining whether an affinity publication policy associated with the user
indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user to publish the information; and

transmitting to the user a message that requests the user to submit a
response that indicates whether or not the user wishes to have the information published if it is determined that the affinity publication policy indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user;

determining whether the user submitted a response to the request within a
predetermined period of time; and

performing a default publication action if the user does not submit the
response before the predetermined period of time expires,

wherein the predetermined period of time is specified by the affinity
publication policy associated with the user, and

wherein the predetermined period of time is set by the user in the affinity
publication policy.

34. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33, wherein the default publication action is specified by the affinity publication policy further comprising computer instructions for determining whether the user submitted a response to the request within a predetermined period of time.

35. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 34, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, or (ii) not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category further comprising computer instructions for publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time.

36. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 35, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category, or (ii) not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category wherein the computer instructions for publishing the information comprises computer instructions for updating a profile associated with the user such that the profile indicates that the user has an affinity for the category included in the information.

37. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 36-34, wherein the default publication action includes either (i) publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category and notifying the user that the information was published, or (ii) not publishing the information related to the relationship between the user and the category and notifying the user that the information will not be published further comprising computer instructions for not publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time.

38. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 36,
wherein the publishing the information comprises updating a profile associated with the user to indicate that the user has an affinity for the category 37, further comprising computer instructions for notifying the user that the information will not be published.

39. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33,
wherein the predetermined threshold is set by the user 34, further comprising computer instructions for determining whether an auto-publish flag is set to TRUE or FALSE.

40. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 39,
wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy further comprising computer instructions for publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time and it is also determined that the auto-publish flag is set to TRUE.

41. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33,
wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy 39, further comprising computer instructions for not publishing the information if it is determined that the user did not submit a response to the request within the predetermined period of time and it is also determined that the auto-publish flag is set to FALSE.

42. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33,
wherein the predetermined threshold is set by an administrator 34, further comprising computer instructions for determining whether there is a particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

43. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 42,
wherein the predetermined threshold is specified by the affinity publication policy further comprising computer instructions for accessing the particular affinity publication policy if

it is determined that there is a particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

44. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises mining electronic mail messages sent to and from the user further comprising computer instructions for accessing a default affinity publication policy if it is determined that there is no particular affinity publication policy that is associated with the user.

45. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises monitoring the user's interaction with a set of one or more stored documents 44, wherein the computer instructions for determining whether an affinity publication policy indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user to publish the information, comprises computer instructions for determining whether the accessed affinity publication policy indicates that the information should not be published without first receiving permission from the user to publish the information.

46. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises receiving a metric value input manually by an administrator further comprising computer instructions for determining an affinity value threshold.

47. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 33, wherein determining an affinity value for the user with respect to the category comprises receiving a metric value input manually by the user 46, further comprising computer instructions for determining whether the affinity value is less than the affinity value threshold, wherein if the affinity value is less than the affinity value threshold, the information is not published.

48. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 45, wherein the set of one or more stored documents are managed by a knowledge management system 33, further comprising computer instructions for:
receiving the response from the user;
determining whether the response indicates that the user wishes to have the information published; and
publishing the information if it is determined that the response indicates that the user wishes to have the information published.

49. **(Currently Amended)** The computer program product of claim 48, wherein the knowledge management system determines a master category list, and wherein the category is included in the master category list computer instructions for publishing the information comprises computer instructions for updating a profile associated with the user such that the profile indicates that the user has an affinity for the category included in the information.

50. **(Original)** A computer signal embodied in a carrier wave readable by a computing system and encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process performing the method recited in claim 1.